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TITLE: Conservation of Natural Resources on Military Installations

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**Report Prepared By:**  
Marsha Towns, Operations Director, Conservation Internships

### Introduction

The Student Conservation Association, Inc. (henceforth in this report referred to as "SCA") is a 501©(3) tax exempt organization (ID#91-0880684) incorporated in the state of New York. SCA recruits and places young people ages sixteen and over in voluntary service in conservation positions nationwide. SCA works in partnership through cooperative agreement with agencies such as the Department of Defense, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other federal, state, private and not for profit agencies. SCA partnerships both benefit the volunteers by providing exposure to and practical hands-on experience in conservation professions, as well as our agency partners by providing much needed conservation work assistance, which due to limited financial and human resources, may otherwise remain unaccomplished.

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#### Body

The Student Conservation Association, Inc. (SCA) has been in partnership with the Department of the Army through a cooperative agreement for the purpose of conserving natural resources on military installations while offering educational service opportunities for youth since 1997. Young people participated in voluntary service through two SCA programs to accomplish this work: Conservation Internships (previously known as the Resource Assistant Program) and Conservation Work Crews. All program activity sites with service dates and task orders are provided as Attachment A in the appendices. Army installations are highlighted in gray.

Conservation Internships provide educational service opportunities in conservation work to young adults eighteen years of age and older. These interns serve along side US Army natural resource professionals providing much needed assistance while obtaining valuable career experience and training [examples of approved Statements of Work are provided as Attachment B in the appendices.] Conservation Interns serve from 12 to 52 weeks. They are provided with a living/food allowance, travel to and from the site, medical insurance for 6 – 12 month positions, supplemental accident insurance and housing. Interns may also be eligible to receive an AmeriCorps education award for their service through a grant from the Corporation for National Service.

Conservation Work Crews (CWC) are crews of 6 –10 high school students (ages 16 – 19) who live and serve together with one to two SCA adult crew leaders. The crews serve for four weeks and then participate in a one- week recreational trip. These SCA crew members participate primarily in trail work and other labor intensive duties while living and working in an interdependent group dynamic (often camping) with a focus on both individual and group achievement. As well as providing much needed conservation assistance to the military installation, SCA crew members are exposed to environmental education programming and team building exercises.

#### Conclusion

The Department of the Army and the Student Conservation Association have a partnership which benefits both parties. The DOA gains high quality work, assistance in getting things done while SCA's ability to pursue its mission is enhanced. We look forward to expanding our programming to the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers in the very near future.

*"The Student Conservation Association provides knowledgeable, eager volunteers willing to gain experience in a wide variety of management areas. Our volunteers have always been more than willing to assist with any project, providing economical assistance while providing opportunities to the volunteer."*

SCA coordinator

US Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon

SCA participants indicate that they gain significant environmental knowledge and greater awareness of how individual behaviors affect the environment, the value of service, and career options. They also reported meaningful personal development and growth [see Attachment C in Reportable Outcomes.]

*"I feel like I got experience here that I could not have obtained without such a program. One of the great strengths of the Program is the professional, patient people that I got to work with."*

SCA Conservation Intern  
Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon

**Attachment A**

**U. S. ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

**DAMD17-96-2-6009**

Summary of SCA Program Activity  
SCA/Army Partnership Highlighted

<b>Installation</b>	<b>Task Order</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Begin Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Participant(s)</b>
Costs	T70001				
			<b>FY1997</b>		
Fort Gordon	T70002	P70001	1/30/1997	9/13/1997	Michael Bien
Fort Irwin	T70003		6/15/1997	7/10/1997	Charlie Crew
Fort Drum	T70004	P70001	5/5/1997	7/25/1997	Brown/Murray
Fort Lewis	T70005		6/23/1997	9/12/1997	Kate Shelley
Camp Edwards	T70006		6/2/1997	8/22/1997	Pine/Wood
Fort McCoy	T70007		6/2/1997	8/22/1997	Lisa Mahan
Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant	T70008		6/30/1997	9/19/1997	James Dietrich
Fort Gordon	T70009		6/23/1997	9/12/1997	Michael Haynes
Fort Hunter Liggett	T70010		7/2/1997	8/6/1997	Delta Crew
Fort Gordon	T70011		9/29/1997	9/28/1998	David Smith
			<b>FY1998</b>		
Fort Gordon	T70012		6/1/1998	5/31/1999	Keith Morin
Arkansas Army National Guard	T80013		6/1/1998	8/21/1998	Vogel/Asbury/Pereira
Fort Gordon	T80014		9/29/1998	9/25/1999	Jason Peden
			<b>FY1999</b>		
Camp Lejeune	T80015	See T90016			
Camp Lejeune	T90016		2/22/1999	2/21/2000	Stackpoole/Rice
Fort Gordon	T90017		6/1/1999	5/31/2000	James Sotiropoulos
Camp Lejeune	T90018		6/7/1999	6/7/1999	William McManus
Camp Pendleton	T90019	P00001	8/16/1999	8/11/2000	Tara Schoenwetter
Fort Gordon	T90020		9/20/1999	9/19/2000	George Godin
Fort Gordon	T90021	P00001	9/29/1999	9/28/2000	Jason Peden
			<b>FY2000</b>		
Jackson Air Guard/Eglin AFB	T00022		12/16/1999	3/7/2000	Jason Brown
Jackson Air Guard/Eglin AFB	T00023		1/13/2000	6/30/2000	Scott Latham
Missouri National Guard	T00024		1/7/2000	3/30/2000	James Schindlbeck
Vandenberg Air Force Base	T00025		1/7/2000	10/20/2000	Jane Childers
Camp Lejeune	T00026		3/1/2000	2/28/2001	Rachel Demots
Camp Lejeune	T00027		2/8/2000	2/7/2001	Deanna Hudgins
Camp Lejeune	T00028		5/1/2000	4/30/2001	G. Gierhart/B. Smith
Fort Gordon	T00029		5/1/2000	9/15/2000	Nathan Kirby
Camp Lejeune	T00030		5/30/2000	5/29/2001	Christy Jo Geraci
Avon Park Air Force Range	T00031		6/12/2000	2/16/2001	Windy Bunn
FB Warren AFB	T00032		8/14/2000	8/13/2001	Stephen Gushue
Camp Pendleton	T00033		8/12/2000	11/4/2000	Tara Schoenwetter
Fort Gordon	T00034		9/11/2000	9/10/2000	Kimberly Fisher
Pentagon	T00035		9/30/2000	9/29/2001	John Lewis
			<b>FY2001</b>		
Vandenberg Air Force Base	T00036		1/25/2001	1/24/2002	Jane Childers
Fort Sam Houston	T00037		2/1/2001	4/27/2001	Matthew Rota
Fort Sam Houston	T00037		2/1/2001	4/27/2001	Verity Mathis
Adelphi Laboratory Center	T00038		2/21/2001	5/16/2001	David Seydel
Camp Lejeune, NC	T00039		3/19/2001	3/18/2002	Jamie Everett

## **Attachment B**

### **Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon Fort Gordon, GA**

Wildlife/Resource Management/Biology

Located approximately 9 miles west of Augusta on the Fall Line of the coastal plain and the piedmont, this area's habitat includes 55,500 acres of sand hills dominated by longleaf pine ecosystem, piedmont, and wetlands including 30 maintained lakes, approximately 40 miles of streams and numerous natural beaver ponds. Duties include: assisting with prescribed burning; hardwood removal species survey and long-term monitoring; habitat enhancement and management; assistance with reintroduction of rare species and environmental education; assisting with surveying and monitoring including vegetation, bird, mammal, reptile/amphibian, forestry and aquatic surveys; assisting with data collection and management; data analysis, and report preparation. Operation of field equipment, field survey and prescribed burn techniques, GPS and GIS training provided.

### **Adelphi Laboratory Center**

**Adelphi, MD**

Resource Management/Forestry/Wildlife

Intern will work in Adelphi Laboratory Center and Blossom Point research Facility which contains approximately 1,800 acres of both developed and undeveloped lands. Duties include: monitoring submerged aquatic vegetation; assisting with erosion control monitoring program; assisting with white-tailed deer hunting program; assisting with timber stand improvement; assisting with office work. Chain saw safety, submerged aquatic vegetation identification, and deer biology training provided.

### **Fort Sam Houston, Camp Bullis**

**Fort Sam Houston, TX**

Bird Identification/GIS/ Administration

Camp Bullis encompasses 28,000 acres and is located on the Edwards Plateau approximately 18 miles northwest of San Antonio. Intern will assist natural resources personnel with wildlife surveys. Duties include: conducting endangered species and faunal (reptile, amphibian, and mammal) surveys utilizing GPS for navigation; directing survey project; collecting data, mapping with Arcview GIS and writing report. Position involves outdoor work with exposure to mosquitoes, snakes, ticks, etc., and hiking over rough terrain in a variety of weather conditions. Identifying target bird vocalizations, and vegetation identification training provided.

## Attachment C

### **A National Study of Outdoor Wilderness Experience, by Professor Stephen Kellert**

In November 1996, SCA received a challenge grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to conduct a national study of the impact on participants of experiential conservation education programs. A major portion of the challenge grant was met by the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

*A National Study of Outdoor Wilderness Experience*, completed by Professor Stephen Kellert of Yale University in September 1998, includes retrospective and longitudinal components. The random sample of respondents includes participants from SCA, National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), and Outward Bound. The study objectives were designed to evaluate the impact of: experiential conservation education generally, the three programs specifically, and SCA's three field programs.

In both the longitudinal and retrospective studies, more than 70 percent of the participants rated their experience as a major influence in their lives. Professor Kellert summarizes: *"A great many respondents reported these relatively brief programs had been among the most satisfying, influential, and worthwhile experiences of their lives. An extraordinary number remarked on how much happier and competent they felt as a consequence of participation. Most expressed the view they had become substantially more confident and capable of coping with everyday life. And, the great majority indicated greater appreciation, awareness, and concern for the natural environment and its conservation because of their participation. These results add support to a growing body of evidence suggesting immersion and challenge in the outdoors, especially wilderness settings, can have meaningful and lasting impacts on especially late adolescents and young adults."*